

ATTENTION!

75th Anniversary of the
Boston Teachers Union
Celebration Party

postponed until

October 16, 2021



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President's Report Jessica J. Tang

Welcoming a New Year and Leaving 2020 Behind

2020 will be a year for the history books: an unprecedented pandemic, a reckoning of racial injustice, a historic election with record voter participation and a turbulent school year throughout it all. All of us have been tested in so many ways—our capacity for adaptation, isolation, anxiety, and working under duress to name a few. It has been a year of chronic stress, trepidation, anger and frustration for so many, and as we emerge from a divisive election that felt like a battle for the soul of our nation, many of us are also exhausted—emotionally, physically and mentally.

The good news is that a new year is just around the corner—we can finally leave 2020 behind and welcome in what we hope will be a new era. The hope that a new presidency comes with—including a new Secretary of Education and a First Lady who is an educator herself—is one that we have long hoped for. President-elect **Joe Biden** has promised to immediately reverse many of the most harmful policies dismantled by the Trump and DeVos administration. He has also committed to choosing an educator for the new Secretary of Education. Our national unions have many members on his transition team. These are all promising developments.

On the horizon is also hopes for a vaccine, that by next summer, is believed to be ready for the larger public and available for essential workers even by early next year. This gives the possibility of herd immunity by next fall. There is light at the end of the tunnel. The hope that next school year will return to "normalcy" is finally within sight. "Normalcy," however, will likely be redefined and revisited, as we have all been impacted during this year in ways that we have perhaps yet to fully understand. We also know that what was "normal" before the pandemic was not what so many in our community needed.

This pandemic exacerbated inequities and laid bare the injustices we already knew existed, but was not so easy for the larger public to ignore anymore—whether it was within education, housing, health care or many other ways. We cannot make the mistake as a district, community or nation to accept the past as our new normal, and we cannot automatically count on new leaders to do what is right. We have much work ahead of us as we continue to advocate for the schools and communities our students,

families and educators deserve. This work will continue to be challenging, unprecedented and without easy solutions.

The New Year will continue to require patience, empathy and forgiveness as we heal not just divisions within the nation politically, but within our own communities as well. Our neighborhoods, schools and our union has been tested and divided during this pandemic: teachers pit against parents; school versus school; and also union member to union member. It was a difficult year because tensions were high, needs were great, resources inadequate and emotions ran high. In this environment trust was running low when we needed it most and we all had to dig deep to not just take care of ourselves, but strive to self-regulate not just to support our students, but so that we could take care of our families and others as well.

My hope is that in this New Year, we will find the kindness that I know is in each of us to help us heal, reflect and strengthen. It is what brought us to this work as educators—love for our students and love for others—that will help us to prevail as a stronger, more powerful and

also more compassionate union of educators. It is up to us to build the type of community we believe in. This is what my late mentor and former principal **Jinny Chalmers** instilled in each of us that became a part of the Young Achievers community—the community she was integral in building.

At Young Achievers, we had a song or anthem of sorts. It went (*with drum beats, of course*):

"As a member of the Young Achievers Science and Math School, I believe I have great powers and important things to learn. I know my power will build a very strong and caring school. I have the power. I have the power. To respect myself and others. To make my school safe. To make good choices and work hard to succeed. To focus and be the best student I can be. To make connections in math, science and technology. I have the power within me. You have the power within you. To study and act in ways that make a difference in our school, our neighborhood, our country, Young Achievers, we rule!"

As we hold **Ilene Carver** (our BTU organizer and widowed wife to Jinny) in our hearts during this holiday season after Ms. Chalmers' tragic and untimely



Jessica J. Tang
BTU President

passing, we also hold in our hearts everyone who is holding grief, pain and loss from this year and prior. These experiences indelibly leave their mark on all of us, but as we leave a year of pain behind, we can remember why we came into this work in first place—what inspired us, who inspired us—and the joy that those memories and people brought us.

As the YA anthem goes, "I have the power within me. You have the power within you." We, both—individually and collectively, have the power to make a difference and carry on the legacy of all those fought bravely before us to create a better, and more just world. As we leave 2020 behind, and welcome 2021 ahead of us, let us remember that we are stronger and better together, and we have the power to make the new year what we need it to be, through learning, kindness and believing in each other.



Members of the Boston Teachers Union were very active on the campaign trail this Fall. See more photos on page 8.

Open Letter to the Labor Movement – Defend Each Other – Demand Democracy!

Our country stands at a moment of peril. A rejected president threatens to overturn the clear verdict of the American people.

Our country stands at a moment of peril. A rejected president threatens to overturn the clear verdict of the American people.

We urge everyone to take President Trump's threats seriously, and prepare to act: to defend democracy in the courts, in the streets and in our workplaces, if Trump tries to steal the election.

The Biden/Harris victory by nearly six million votes resulted from the massive turnout of Black, Brown and Native voters in the large cities like Atlanta and Detroit, and in Arizona, Nevada and other states, and of union voters in key swing states

The record Biden/Harris vote was the expression in the electoral arena of the strike wave of educators against the destruction of our public school system, of the 24 million people who took to the streets in the Black Lives Matter uprising

against systemic white supremacy, and of the Women's March. This was a democratic uprisings against systematic voter suppression and intimidation, the result of many years of grass-roots organizing. These movements can rightfully claim this victory as their own.

President-elect **Joe Biden** has promised to bring America together.

We too, want to bring the country together: around a program that that serves the vast working class majority who suffered during the pandemic while the billionaires enriched themselves. We speak of the nurses, the food service workers, the first responders, the postal workers, the educators who risked their lives. We speak of the poor and immigrant communities, hardest hit by the pandemic due to inadequate housing, health care and job safety protections.

This means passing a Green New Deal to protect our imperiled planet by providing millions of good union jobs. It means passing the Heroes Act and more, to protect workers and small businesses

and the cities and states during the COVID-19 crisis. It means defending the vote with the John Lewis Voting Rights Act. It means expanding Medicare to cover us all. It means passing the PRO act to make it easier for workers to form unions -- a democratic voice in the workplace. It means making the District of Columbia a state, giving those largely Black communities a say in their governance. It means investment in infrastructure -- another broken promise by Trump. It means defending LGBTQ rights. It means comprehensive immigration reform. It means rejecting the free trade deals that benefited the multinational corporations at the expense of workers here and abroad.

These measures are widely popular. Only the billionaires -- the one percent -- and the unwillingness of many of our leaders to fight for them, stand between us and progress.

Here in Massachusetts, Governor **Charlie Baker** and the state legislature have failed to provide criminal justice



Garret Virchick
Boston Union Teacher
Co-Editor

reform, protections from evictions and foreclosures, drivers' licenses for undocumented residents and much needed revenue from progressive tax measures. We need increased unemployment insurance for mothers and fathers who have to stay home, emergency paid sick time, equitably funded and safe K-12 and public higher education, and safety protections and paid leave for essential workers.

We did not win the presidential election to return to the status quo. The teachers' strikes, the mobilizations of the Black Lives Matter uprising and the Women's March will be our models in the struggle ahead. We won to seek justice for all -- and we will fight for it, starting today.

I'm Mourning the Sounds of Kids Arguing in My Classroom Noisy Disagreements are Fuel for Social Growth in Childhood

When I see my students on Zoom, I am in full control of the noise and I can turn off their microphones with omnipotence. I can create silence, and it is deafening.

Let us gather today to remember the noise of a first-grade classroom. Last November, and for over a hundred Novembers before that, there were children in my classroom, and those children were loud. Now it is dystopically silent, as if it is awaiting a future team of archaeologists to draw conclusions about a past civilization of small people who struggled to add and whose pencils often broke. There are no stories being shouted about slights on the school bus and triumphs on the playground. There are no wet shoes squeaking across the floor. There are no words being sounded out for the first time.

Before, we made music. Now, to avoid the incoherence and microphone feedback of singing together over Zoom, I sing "The More We Get Together" at my computer screen while my students are on mute -- a lonely concert for faraway children whose voiceless mouths sometimes appear to be moving along with me. Before, new words tiptoed off the tongues of young English learners for the first time. Now, due to the vagaries of computer speakers, microphones, and slow Internet speeds, children's speech falters in competition with background noise and audio glitches that sound like construction equipment. Before, first-graders argued over glue sticks, space on the rug, and appealing picture books. Now, because they have nothing to share in virtual space, young children in a Zoom class cannot participate in the intense disputes of childhood.

Surely, you might be thinking, that last point was made in error. The lack of arguments must be an improvement. This writer, you might imagine, has not borne witness to the furies and bitterness unleashed in a skirmish over a magenta crayon, an altercation over a ruler, or a standoff over the classroom copy of "Green Eggs and Ham."

I assure you, I have seen them all. I know that childhood conflicts can be



When I see my students on Zoom, I am in full control of the noise and I can turn off their microphones with omnipotence. I can create silence, and it is deafening.
-- Photo by David L. Ryan, *Boston Globe*

passionate and intense. I know they can be loud. But I mourn their absence in a Zoom classroom.

When children argue, they learn about themselves and the people around them. If they want something in the world -- a glue stick, a turn in a conversation -- they can use their words to make it theirs. Sometimes, though, that desire conflicts with other people's interests. That glue stick over there? I want it, but so does Xiomara at the exact same time. An opinion about "The Story of Ferdinand"? I have a strong one, but Jamal does too.

A noisy argument offers a space to work out those understandings and arrive at more productive modes of behavior, like disagreeing with respect and sharing limited resources without hostility. With a teacher's support, young

children can also begin to make noise for a higher purpose. Arguments over concrete objects eventually, as children grow up, evolve into actionable debates over subjects like sexism, gender identity, and police brutality.

As adults, our daily life is a bottomless reservoir of potential arguments. We jockey for space on the T, reach for the last box of raisins at the grocery store, decide how to divvy up speaking roles for a presentation at work. Most of us can get through the day without these conflicts escalating into crisis. That is not an inconsequential achievement. It comes from seeing ourselves as people with legitimate needs and interests who live in a community of others with their

own legitimate needs and interests. And it begins in noisy classrooms, with the mediation of a decent teacher.

When I see my students on Zoom, I am in full control of the noise and I can turn off their microphones with omnipotence. Children no longer need to regulate their noise to fit their social environment, because a teacher can do it for them with the push of a button. I can create silence, and it is deafening.

*(Josh Benjamin teaches first grade at the Russell Elementary School in Dorchester.)
(Reprinted from the Boston Globe, November 11, 2020.)*

Know Your Rights Caren Carew

When Are School Site Council Elections and Meetings Held and is There Training for SSC Members?

The School Site Council is the central governing body of the school under the school-based management/shared decision-making model. The contract stipulates; “Elections for new SSC members shall be conducted as early in the school year as possible [by October 15], and a first meeting of the new council shall be held no later than October 31st. At the first meeting, a monthly calendar should be agreed upon by the SSC members for the entire school year and be made public through distribution to all staff and parents. Any change must be approved by the SSC with at least one week’s notice to all staff and parents. SSC Meetings should be at times convenient for all members and times may alternate to meet this goal.”

Get empowered – knowledge is power. The BTU and BPS have set the following dates for SSC training that all elected SSC members are invited and encouraged to attend. This is an interactive process that brings SSC members from attendees to active informed participants.

These workshops will be held via Zoom with all sessions held between 5:30-7:00 p.m.

To register please contact: ccarew@btu.org and cgrant@bostonpublicschools.org.

- **SSC 101 – Basics & Shared Decision Making:** Nov. 19th; 5:30-7:00 p.m..
- **SSC 102 – Budget Basics:** Nov. 24th or Dec. 1st or Dec. 3rd; 5:30-7:00 p.m.
- **SSC 104 – Recruiting & Retaining Diverse Council:** Dec. 19th or Jan. 7th; 5:30-7:00 p.m.
- **SSC 105 – Engaging Students in Decision Making:** Dec. 15th or Jan. 5th; 5:30-7:00 p.m.
- **SSC 106 – Personnel Subcommittee:** Jan. 21st or Feb. 4th; 5:30-7:00 p.m.

What Approach Should the SSC Take Toward Decision Making?

It is expected that the SSC will function by consensus or general agreement of its members. Members of the SSC are expected to operate as a single decision making team. Their task is to work together to fashion effective solutions to the school’s educational challenges. SSC have parent, BTU staff, student, and associate members to guarantee that decisions reflect the viewpoints of everyone in the school community. Reaching consensus does not mean that all members must agree with decisions unanimously. Consensus is a way of working together where some members may disagree with a final decision, but yet agree to support it. Consensus occurs when most, if not all, members agree on the matter to be decided.

Consensus won’t necessarily result in endless discussions and no decisions, particularly if the following guidelines are followed: Prioritize the importance of the issue at hand. Normally, the more important the issue, the more time members

should be willing to devote to reaching consensus decision. Routine matters should be given much less valuable time and energy than fundamental issues. Provide opportunities for all views to be expressed. Members with differing views should have the opportunity to make sure other members have understood their views before ending the discussion. Although others may still not be persuaded, everyone must have a chance to state their views and to have others listen. The strength of feeling about an issue must be gauged. How strongly members feel should guide how much time should be devoted to an issue as well.

SSC meetings are not competitive, win-or-lose events. Making decisions solely on the basis of majority votes runs the unacceptable risk of dividing the Council. School improvement is defiantly a matter of teamwork, trust, and shared commitment on the part of everyone in the school community. This team approach doesn’t prohibit voting in every case. Occasionally, periodic ‘straw polls’ may be a good idea to identify the common ground on the way to reaching consensus decisions. Voting can save valuable time reaching decisions on routine matters. Under the terms of the BTU Contract, decisions must be formalized by a majority of the SSC. The Principal must vote with the majority of the SSC and they may not delegate their vote. Here, the purpose of voting is to validate and to make official consensus decisions. Formal voting should be the last step in the decision-making process. If the vote results in a simple majority but does not reveal consensus on the issue debated, it should be viewed as a signal that the best option has not yet been developed and proposed. Unless all members are willing to support a majority decision, more discussion is needed. Votes which split parents and BTU members are of particular concern and a clear indication that consensus hasn’t been achieved. In such cases, the decision should be set aside and the issue should be revisited.

The Principal may veto a majority decision of a SSC. The Principal must vote with the majority for a decision to be adopted and carried out. In the event of a veto, the Principal is required to give their reasons in writing and in person at a following meeting for any vote that is in opposition to a majority of the Council. Successful School Based Management demands cooperation, trust, and mutual regard of every one!

How are Bylaws/Operational Procedures for SSC’s Determined?

Each School-Site Council determines most of its own operating procedures through the adoption of SSC bylaws. Each SSC is required to pass bylaws to govern its operation. The bylaws must be approved by two-thirds of the BTU members in the school and by two-thirds of the parents who come to a parent meeting for which

there must be at least two weeks notice.

The SSC bylaws must include the following operational procedures: how elections will be organized and conducted; when meetings will be held; the notice procedure for announcing meetings; who is responsible for co-chairing the SSC with the Principal and for recording minutes; what the system is for selecting alternates who have the same racial identity as the members they would be representing; the terms of office and how they will be staggered; and what the salary is in regards to members who fail to regularly attend.

The bylaws may also include provisions that address the following: what subcommittees will be established in addition to the Personnel Subcommittee; if a portion of each meeting is set aside for public comment by individuals in attendance who are not SSC members; how the SSC will inform the wider school community of its decisions and activities; where minutes will be posted and distributed; what the process is for amending the bylaws.

What Can Be Done If Someone is Being Harassed in the BPS?

The BPS has a Superintendent’s Circular #EQT-4 ‘Non-Discrimination and Zero Tolerance Policy’, which outlines BPS’s commitment to “maintaining an educational environment and workplace where bigotry and intolerance, including discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, disability, or age have no place, and where any form of intimidation, threat, coercion and/or harassment that insults the dignity of others & interferes with their freedom to learn or work is unacceptable.”

The circular emphasizes; “Therefore, any form of discrimination or harassment, as described [in the body of the circular], of any BPS student or employee shall be viewed as serious misconduct and shall result in discipline, up to and including termination of the offending employee or expulsion of the responsible student.” It is suggested you review the circular in its entirety and if after doing so feels compelled to report such matters as set forth should do so in Superintendent’s Circular #EQT-2 ‘Employee Grievances of Discrimination or Harassment’, #EQT-3 ‘Student Grievances of Discrimination or Harassment’. For additional info, contact BPS Equity Office at 617-635-9650.



Caren Carew
BTU Secondary
Field Representative

There are also State and Federal remedies outlined at the end of Superintendent’s Circular #EQT-4 to file complaints concerning harassment with the (MCAD) Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination 617-994-6000 or the United States Equal Opportunity Commission (EEOC) located in the JFK Federal Building in Boston.

Are We Entitled to Time for Cancer Screening?

Yes. There is a Superintendent’s Circular #HRS-PP-14 ‘Paid Leave for Cancer Screening and/or Living Organ Donation’ which states that the Mayor signed an Executive Order allowing all city employees to use four (4) hours of leave per calendar year for various types of cancer screening including that for breast, prostate, colon, skin, thyroid, oral cavity, lymph nodes, reproductive organs, and lungs. The procedure dictates that employees are allowed one (1) four (4) hour period that cannot be broken into hourly units. It requires that they must make their leave request through their responsibility center manager [principal] and then provide them a signed copy of a medical document verifying the date that the employee was given a cancer screening. For attendance reporting purposes, the time reporting code S1200 to report time taken under this provision must be used. This cancer screening leave time is not charged to any accumulated sick time. All questions concerning this circular should be made to the BPS Office of Human Capital, at 617-635-9670.

BTU Phone Numbers

Office.....	617-288-2000
Health & Welfare.....	617-288-0500
AFT Massachusetts.....	617-423-3342
Function Office.....	617-288-3322
Lounge Office.....	617-288-3322
Vision Center.....	617-288-5540
Tremont Credit Union.....	781-843-5626

Boston Union Teacher



Boston Teachers Union,
AFT Local 66, AFL-CIO

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The opinions expressed in the *Boston Union Teacher* do not necessarily represent the views of the Boston Teachers Union, or those of its members.

WHEN WRITING:

All correspondence to the *Boston Union Teacher* must be typewritten and include the author’s name and school or department if not school-based.

All articles must be appropriate to the publication, and in good taste.

Letters to the Editor should be sent to letters@btu.org

DEADLINE:

The deadline for submitting articles for the next issue of the *Boston Union Teacher* is December 9th.

All copy should be e-mailed to mmaguire@btu.org and gvrchick@btu.org
This deadline will be strictly adhered to.

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HAPPY KWANZAA!
Merry Christmas
Happy Hanukkah
Happy Holidays
from the Officers and Staff of the
Boston Teachers Union!

Grading During the Pandemic

"Michael in West Roxbury, you are next on Boston Public Radio."

Driving home from a day of remote teaching from my old classroom (by choice), I called into Boston Public Radio. The topic that day, September 22, 2002, was the beginning of the new school year.

Jim Braude was talking about how **Mitch McConnell** and the US Senate were unlikely to authorize extra funding to help schools across the country deal with COVID. I was up next and I opened with "You are right about the money, I can't argue with that. But I think we can control how we grade kids."

Obviously teaching is not the way it used to be. (Funny how nine months ago feels like five years ago.) I suggest that grading ought not be the same either. I am not advocating for a repeat of the "everybody passes" movement at the end of the last school year. But I am advocating for a new way to grade students.

I would love for us to move away from 100% to zero and from As to Fs. I prefer a broader look at grades. I would like to see us use meeting the standard, competency or mastery. We should still include a non-promotional category, but please let us not call it failure. Perhaps something like "not ready for the next level" or "a second year is needed in order to meet the standard." For certainly the student in such a circumstance is not a failure but rather a victim of the times. Just as it would not be fair to advance a child who is unprepared, it is equally unfair to blame/label that child.

These are my wishes which live in the subjunctive mood. My grade book, however, dwells in the indicative mood. (*Latin humor*). But just because I must use As and Bs does not mean that I have to grade harshly or adhere to a rigid submission schedule.

I am very tolerant and understanding

of the numerous crises my students are enduring primarily because I am undergoing similar difficulties. I'll be blunt, I am 50 years young. While I can set the clock on the microwave, I often seek help from my teenage son on which cable remote I need to start the TV. I unashamedly ask advice from my younger colleagues on how to use the

I am not going to mark my students down for any mistakes I am making in transitioning to a digital world.

latest Chrome add-on. I am trying my best to be a 21st Century Classist; and I will be the first to admit that some days are worse than others. (Don't get me wrong, I am a wizard when the wifi goes down because I started teaching with paper and chalk.)

All of which is why my guiding principle in remote learning is this: I am not going to mark my students down for any mistakes I am making in transitioning to a digital world.

In short, I'm grading lightly. Let's say I give a five question quiz (more on assessments later). If a student correctly answers two of those five questions, should that student fail the quiz? If we were in a traditional classroom, with the usual schedule and with the controllable conditions, then I might be inclined to agree with 40% being a failing grade. But we are not in any way, shape or form in a usual situation. Wifi is unreliable, older students often have to care for their younger siblings when at home, Zoom fatigue is real and consequential. The list goes on and on. Not to mention the impossibility of controlling the testing environment, even with cameras on. Therefore I cannot with a clean conscience use the same grading schema

as I did last year.

As mentioned above, assessments are a wild gamble these days. I have both paper and digital folders going back to the 1990s full of various assessments on how to translate Julius Caesar's Commentaries on the Gallic War. Even if I pop them into Google Classroom, what's to stop a student from opening a new tab in order to ask Mr. Google for translation help? Or what's to stop two students from texting each other during the exam? (After all, the school committee members text each other during their meetings; so I guess texting during work is officially sanctioned.)

I am trying my level best to administer fair assessments so that I can tell if the students are retaining the information (because, isn't that the goal?). But it is a work in progress. I no longer have centuries of pedagogy to rely upon. I have my intuition and the help of my colleagues. Both are valuable and I do



Michael J. Maguire
Boston Union Teacher
Co-Editor

believe ultimately helpful. But I cannot say with certainty that my method of assessing is developed enough to quantify a student's performance using the old metrics.

The best I can do is present the material in such a way that students can understand it. My desire in grading lightly is to lessen the anxiety we are all feeling so that learning can be a joy in and of itself.

(Michael J. Maguire teaches Latin at Boston Latin Academy.)

Letter to the Boston Herald

Dear Editor,

We are dismayed but not surprised that Michael Graham would scapegoat teacher unions for all of society's ills. (*Zoom calls expose bad behavior and undermine schoolkids, October 23, 2020*) Contrary to his unfounded assertions, the teachers' unions are not demanding Zoom or remote learning. The Boston Teachers Union has been vocal since March that the district come up with a feasible plan to get students into schools. The district has not responded to either the teachers' or the parents' pleas.

The major problem Boston faces in returning to in person instruction is decades of deferred maintenance on our buildings. Forget HVAC systems, many of our windows won't open. We have uneven heat and virtually no AC. COV-

ID did not cause these problems but it sure is highlighting them now. Boston could have spent money on portable air filtration systems, instead it spent \$900 per classroom on video cameras but only \$15 on box fans.

The district has its priorities backwards, and Mr. Graham would be well advised to print facts instead of fantasies.

Sincerely,
Stephanie Lindeborg
Michael J. Maguire

(Stephanie Lindeborg, teacher at Boston Latin Academy and BTU building representative there, and Michael J. Maguire, teacher at Boston Latin Academy, member of the BTU Executive Board.)

(Published on November 1, 2020 in the Boston Herald.)

Open Letter to Mayor Martin Walsh Keep Our Kids Alive

I am writing this open letter to Mayor Walsh as a City of Boston constituent, employee, a Boston Public Schools (BPS) parent, a BPS spouse, a BPS employee and as an essential worker.

I would like to preface this letter with the statement that as a Registered Nurse, I am an essential worker regardless of where I'm employed and I chose a career path that places me at risk for infection, illness and death. I am not writing this letter on my behalf, but on the behalf of BPS families and staff who did not choose to be placed at risk. I am writing with a singular intention and goal of student & staff health, safety, social-emotional well-being and academic achievement.

I cannot sit back while Mayor Walsh & Dr. Cassellius rush into reopening schools when very little was done to improve them while they were closed.

Mayor Walsh has insisted twice now that our most vulnerable populations return to school buildings. I'm not including Dr. Cassellius in that statement, as he hires Boston Public Schools' superintendents and our School Committee Members which I imagine prevents independent decision making in the best interest of BPS students, families and staff. This is politically, logistically and systemically problematic; I digress.

As far as school reopening conversations go - there was very little dialogue between BPS School Based Nurses and district level leaders in Health Services. BPS School Based Nurses attempted to

initiate a dialogue, starting in March, 2020 through present and continue to be largely ignored.

Decisions made at the district level were not informed by school based nurses. This not only feels like a huge opportunity missed - I mean how many people can say they have a virtual STEM think tank full of educators and healthcare professionals at their disposal, yet failed to include us in the reopening process. It is important to note because school based nurses as well as STEM educators have intricate scientific foundational understandings of our school buildings and the logistics within our school communities.

We know that protocol/policy/safety measure is only as good as its adherability.

With an October 1st deadline, BPS staff and BTU members participated in safety walkthroughs, in all 125 school buildings in the district. We placed ourselves at risk to do this, understanding the buildings were unsafe. We performed the safety walkthroughs and shared the concerning findings with Mayor Walsh. My school's first walkthrough accumulated 3 checks on the roughly 50 item checklist. My school's second walkthrough accumulated a few more, but nothing close to a "safe" status prior to schools reopening to students.

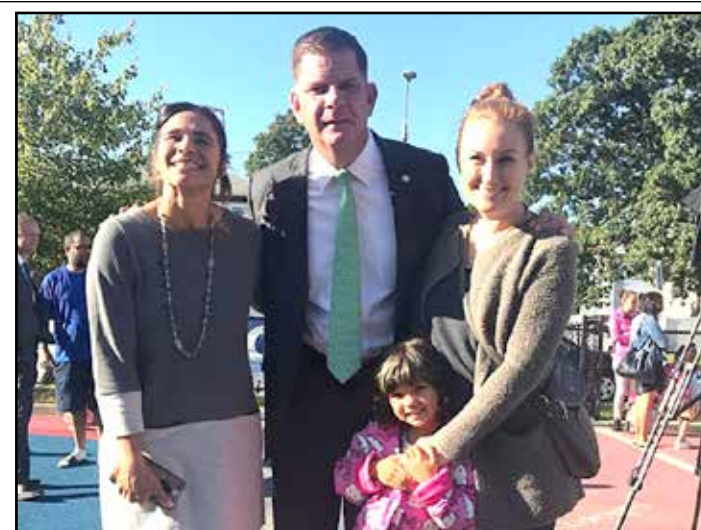
The most egregious of all of the safety violations, however, is the unsafe air quality and lack of filtration and ventilation. Despite this glaring issue of inadequate

ventilation/filtration, BPS chose to reopen anyway. Mayor Walsh even went as far to say that BPS buildings have adequate ventilation. This statement is baseless and misleading. We know that HEPA filtration/upgraded HVAC filters to MERV-13

or better are the current national and global public health recommendations.

Mayor Walsh is providing disinformation to students, staff and families about ventilation in our school buildings. Only 37 of our 125 school buildings have an HVAC system with a filtration capability. The remaining 88 schools have been instructed to open partially opening windows and plug in a box fan.

This demonstration was lauded by Michael Loconto, former School Committee Chairperson, as best practice. As a healthcare provider, I am appalled and embarrassed. This isn't a best practice. This isn't even good practice. This is bad practice. A partially opening window combined with a box fan actually recirculates the virus into the air. This information has been shared with Mayor Walsh by the BTU in collaboration with MassCOSH. Adequate ventilation in the absence of an HVAC system with



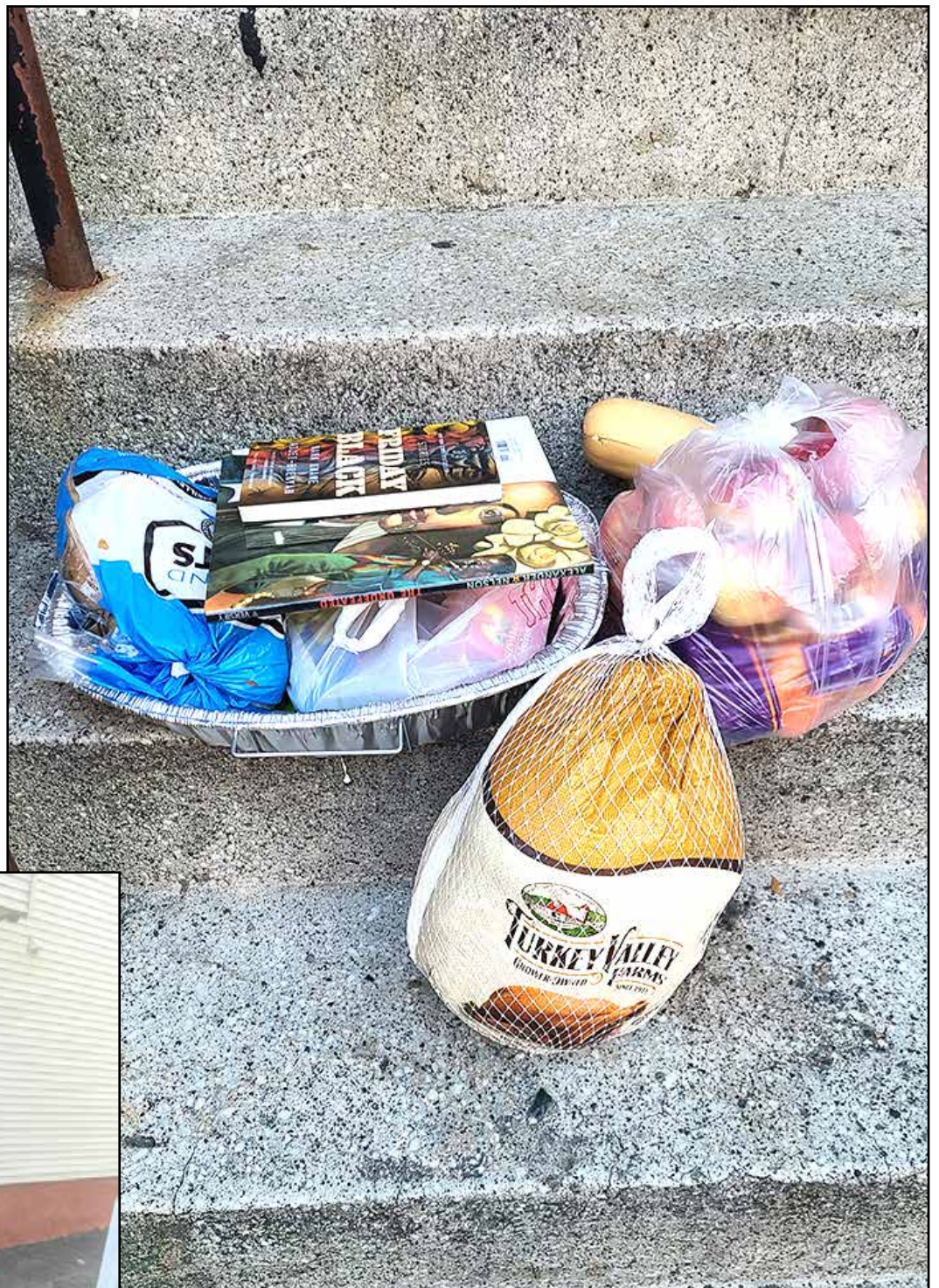
Dr. Brenda Cassellius, Mayor Marty Walsh, Lauren O'Malley-Singh & Uma Singh on her First Day of School, 2019.

filtration is HEPA filtration, as recommended by the CDC. Mayor Walsh has not provided any schools with HEPA filters. Mayor Walsh is actively complicit in placing his employees and BPS children at risk for illness and death.

If I cannot appeal to Mayor Walsh's humanity, perhaps I can appeal to his budget. A HEPA filter for 800 ft² costs roughly \$150. This is not beyond the City of Boston's capabilities and I call upon the Mayor to immediately disburse funds for HEPA filtration in classrooms. HEPA filtration in each classroom cannot possibly cost more than your current plan in place: keeping windows open through the winter season, thus increasing heating usage and costs.

If I cannot appeal to Mayor Walsh's humanity nor his budget, perhaps I can appeal to his interest in avoiding litigation. Mayor Walsh, how are you ensur-

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Adrienne Jordan volunteering with the Red Cross to deliver turkeys to our students across the City of Boston on behalf of the Boston Teachers Union.

What a pleasure to service our students and families during these difficult times.

Keep Our Kids Alive...

continued from page 4

ing our BPS children with Asthma and Sick Cell are not being triggered into Sick Cell Crises and Asthma Attacks, with open windows in November? These children would be immediately brought to emergency rooms all over the city. Have you prepared our city hospitals to prepare their pediatric Emergency Rooms and ICUs for this horrific scenario, Mayor Walsh?

The first reopening in October was unnecessarily terrifying. The face masks I received for symptomatic students/staff are not FDA approved Surgical Masks, as required through DESE. They're face masks and are ineffective in preventing respiratory transmission of diseases. I've requested appropriate masks since October 15th. I was told they were at the Bolling Building. I offered to go there to pick up the masks and I was told they're in a vendor warehouse. I have no idea where these masks are and to this day still have no effective PPE for symptomatic people in my school.

Days into the first reopening, BPS had its first known COVID-19 + case. There was no district guidance for a building protocol to follow, so the school based nurse received telephone triage from the district-level Health Services. There is no formal guidance on what in-building procedure to follow if a student or staff is actively COVID-19 + in a BPS building - I have asked for it multiple times including asking Dr. Cassellius personally and

I have not received it. What do we do with a symptomatic student who takes a MBTA/bus/walks to school without alternative transportation? That was the exact situation at hand. I would be remiss if I didn't also share that Mayor Walsh, you had all of this knowledge of how the first COVID-19 + case went in BPS on the **eve of your choosing to keep our school buildings open > 4% positivity rate.** Your actions speak volumes.

As the days, weeks and months go by, we have learned more about COVID-19 that needs our attention as a city:

- Independent air quality tests to determine baseline air quality, without deviation from best standards of practice.
- COVID-19 is airborne.
 - This means the size of a COVID-19 respiratory particulate can be as small as 0.3 μ m. That automatically tells us that adequate air filtration would include MERV-15 (or at least 13) filters in our filtered HVAC BPS buildings and portable HEPA filters throughout the rest.
 - This also means the only PPE that effectively prevents airborne transmission is N95 respirators.
- It's potential to be airborne increases in poorly ventilated buildings

- We know we have poorly ventilated buildings
- COVID-19 in its airborne state remains suspended in the air for hours and travels beyond 6'
- Brief encounters throughout a day constitute Close Contact. This new criteria was born out of a study that aligns closely with situations we find ourselves in as school based staff. This particular statement struck me deeply:
 - "the employee did have 'numerous brief (one-minute) encounters that cumulatively exceeded 15 minutes.' During his eight-hour shift, he was within six feet of an infected person an estimated 22 times, for a total of about 17 minutes of exposure."
- Follow CDC Guidelines:
 - Implement in-school COVID-19 rapid antigen testing with the expectation that BPS will be included in part of the 2 million test distribution to MA schools - this would require immediate attention to coordinate, as it requires particular credentialing for these rapid antigen testing to be performed.
 - PPE for Airborne Transmission
 - Air filtration for Airborne Transmission

- Create district-wide policies on how to handle non-adherence to the mitigation strategies by those in school buildings. As it stands, we do not have a policy around that - it is being left up to the schools.
- Create district-wide procedures on how information about a covid + case in a school is communicated to families including next steps.
- Align school safety practices with national guidelines, not DESE guidelines, as Jeff C. Riley is not a medical professional nor public health expert.

As we look towards the future with BPS rushing to reopen amidst a pandemic during flu season, I remain terrified. We still don't have PPE, safer air quality, nor do we have district guidance on in-building protocols to follow in a pandemic setting. Students and staff are being placed at risk for illness and death. One single life lost due to the political and economic pressures trickling down to our city's leadership is unacceptable. Further, a single life lost due to this egregious neglect of our buildings by sending students and staff into buildings with unsafe air safety will fall solely on the shoulders of our city's leadership.

Mayor Walsh, the city is watching and we are voting.

*Signed,
Lauren O'Malley-Singh, MSN, RN*

Reading, Writing and Talking with Kelly: Learning from and with Our Students

When I was at Cambridge Rindge and Latin, in the early 90's, the high school was provided with funding and equipment to allow city kids a chance to learn to ski. A group of friends demanded I join them. This required waking before the sun rose and a crack of dawn trip to Youth Opportunities and Enrichment Services (Y.E.S.) in the South End to pick out ill fitting skis and boots. On the slow drive to New Hampshire, dozing and chatting, friends would easily convince me to forgo lessons with an expert instructor. On each trip, friends would take me to the top of a mountain, shout two bits of info over their shoulders and leave me there. I would push off half heartedly. Before reaching a halfway mark, my boots would fall off and I would tumble into the snow. Cold and miserable, I would trudge down the mountain past the bunny slope where others engaged in lessons, learning slowly and with support. Hours later, my friends would find me alone, inside the lodge, next to a blazing fire with some warm drink in my hand. I am not, nor ever will be, a skier.

What does this have to do with reading and writing? The power of teacher feedback, of having a knowledgeable other at our elbow as we learn or expand our current capacity matters greatly. "How do your readers feel about reading? Will they do it without you? How do your writers feel about writing? Will they engage in writing to help themselves learn? To expand understanding? To process? Or only for a grade, a small

mark on a page, one of many that across a lifetime may shape or alter an identity for good or for bad or for naught?"

We find it easy to compartmentalize literacy learning. We allow students to engage in lots of "reading" activities without actually ensuring students are the ones reading, writing and conversing in increasingly complex ways. Phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension within, about and beyond the text, how we hear and manipulate sounds as readers and writers, prefixes, suffixes, the syntax and semantics from sentence to sentence... it all matters, but for students, the emotional connection to becoming literate is paramount. We cannot afford for our students to sit by the fire without a book in their hands.

"Do students engage in conversation to open their world or do they want clear demarcations between good and bad, right and wrong?" Our society is growing increasingly divided. Families are turning on each other, rather than hearing each other out and saying, "I disagree, but I hear your point". Teaching students to become critical of information online, to create ideas rather than just to consume them and to continue to grow as learners through digital communities is part of our work too. Civic engagement, moving beyond headlines and soundbites and searching for nuance in the news remains critical in remote, hybrid and face-to-face instruction.

This is literacy learning.

In this day and age, with few students at our side and many at home, on

chromebooks, longing for hugs and joy and connection, can we help them see reading and writing and talk as essential tools for building identity and reaching out to the complexity that is the world of 2020? Or will we get bogged down in the bits and teach a lesson on grammar, a lesson on phonics, a lesson on making text-to-text connections?

Don't get me wrong, these can all be critical details to support and expand a student's current capacity, but when used en-masse, these bits can also be part of the "dumbing down of curriculum", a practice often pushed upon large urban districts when smaller, more privileged school systems are promoting dialogue and inquiry and student independence as a means to leverage access for all.

"If we keep a focus on the larger picture of becoming increasingly literate, can we still teach the bits?" Of course. We utilize multiple texts, 5-10 each day, to ensure breadth and depth and as students interact, reading and writing and talking we remind and deliberately instruct and "catch" them doing what we need them to do more of. "Yes! That makes sense, reread it again and be sure it looks right too!". "Does that sound right to you? Check it and be sure it sounds right and makes sense!", this is what we sound like as we put students in control of self-monitoring, searching for more information and discovering new things for themselves.

In the upper grades, we engage students in word study, analyzing roots, and prefixes and suffixes as they grapple with extrapolating meaning from a text. Poetry and spoken word and performances carry power, as the meaning must be inferred and each word carries weight. Choice and intrinsic motivation matter more than schools have cared to acknowledge historically. Our readers are sometimes quiet about this and other times are quite vocal, telling us, "don't put me in a box...I've been reading all my life but all I like comic books and they don't count in school".

If we affirmed the fact that children need meaningful interactions to develop deep understandings, we might ensure that literacy learning be rooted in joyous, culturally relevant texts, talk and socializing with peers along with clear, intentional teaching in regards to phonological awareness, orthography, phonics and ongoing word study.

If we were to acknowledge that all our students come to school carrying with them rich language experiences from their home culture and if we honored the fact that each dialect and language is made up of patterns developed socially, historically and culturally over eons, we could help students map their language onto the language of books and expand their ability to read, write and talk across varied genres and purposes.

Inviting students into a literate world goes far beyond telling them what to do, what to read and forever making them write to a prompt. It requires valuing the oral language they bring to school from home and community. It requires breathing life into the guiding principles of the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for English Language Arts to ensure that reading, writing, speaking and listening becomes the work of our students in each discipline, that this work is in their hands as often as possible and that we are their coaches and guides, pointing up letters, words, phrases and nuances of meaning only when they cannot discover these things for themselves.

Some would have us arguing for only phonics or only comprehension, only fluency or only vocabulary instruction but as educators, we have to understand that it all matters. A comprehensive frame for literacy teaching and learning remains a critical tool missing from each and every packaged curriculum. To be responsive, flexible teachers capable of reaching a wide array of student needs, we must understand how to teach our readers and our writers through multiple texts daily, weekly and monthly. We must watch our students closely as they engage in the act of reading connected text and writing out their ideas and talking with their peers. Yes, this is doubly challenging as we teach remotely and in-person, but in order to take note of subtle changes over time, we must see student learning as it occurs, in real time. We must jot down tiny celebrations each day, new words, ideas and understandings as they emerge, making a map of all they know and can do.

As educators, we are charged with helping students develop a love of reading through reading aloud, independent reading and by exposing children to a wide array of texts, scaffolding as needed to ensure access to a diverse set of authentic, intact and unadapted texts. Students should have frequent opportunities each day for discussing and writing about reading in order to develop critical thinking skills and to demonstrate understanding.

The Massachusetts frameworks require us to, "select works of fiction and non-fiction that instill in students a deep appreciation for art, beauty, and truth, while broadening their understanding of the human condition from differing points of view. Reading, discussing, and writing about high-quality prose and poetry should also help students develop empathy for one another and a sense of their shared values and literary heritage, while learning about who they are as individuals and developing the capacity for independent, rigorous thinking". As Boston Public School educators we value all students carry with them, the love of family and community, the energy of this city as it works to bridge years of negativity. We partner with our students, finding resources to help survive the hard bits, sharing their brilliance with them and with others. We find ways to do this remotely, in hybrid or face-to-face settings.

We must consider, "Who will kids be as readers, writers and thinkers after a year in our care? (Gallagher, 2020)" and we must plan deliberately for scaffolded, joyful daily instruction including:

- Reading Aloud
- Shared and Close Reading
- Guided Reading
- Independent Reading
- Writing across Genre
- Writing About Reading
- Phonics, Phonemic Awareness and Word Study
- Intense Analytical Opportunities to Communicate with Each Other
- Reading, Writing and Talking must occur across art and music, mathematics, science, history, physical education and every other possible aspect of daily life

Reading, writing and talking as mathematicians, as scientists, as artists and musicians, as civilians posed to cast a calculated ballot, these are all important. We do not know who they will become. Learning from and with our students

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RESOURCES TO EXPLORE

Videos:

A Culture of Reading: <https://vimeo.com/124937009>

Jason Reynolds on Book Haters:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6fFmiHWtlQ>

Accountable Talk Third Grade Example of Student Run Discussion:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eGRUOz2pJzk>

Effective Early Literacy Practice Video Library:

<https://readingrecovery.org/professional-learning/effective-literacy-practices-video-library/>

Readings:

The guiding principles (pages 15 and 16)

Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for English Language Arts:

<https://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/ela/2017-06.pdf>

Four Ways Kids Use Self-Monitoring to Learn:

<https://www.understood.org/en/learning-thinking-differences/child-learning-disabilities/executive-functioning-issues/4-ways-kids-use-self-monitoring-to-learn>

Keeping virtual learning real for early readers:

<https://literacypages.wordpress.com/2020/10/15/raising-remote-readers-keeping-it-real/>

Blogs:

The Mind Online Podcast:

<https://www.tolerance.org/podcasts/the-mind-online>

Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking Virtually in the Early Years:

<https://readingrecovery.org/teaching-literacy-in-a-virtual-world/>

Zaretta Hammond Breaking out of the Bilingualism Double Standard:

<https://crtandthebrain.com/breaking-out-of-the-bilingualism-double-standard/>

Zaretta Hammond Start with Responsive:

<https://crtandthebrain.com/start-with-responsive/>

Centering Reading Joy in the Virtual Classroom:

<https://pennillesripp.com/2020/08/25/centering-reading-joy-in-the-virtual-classroom/>

Digital Notebooks for Reading Identity Development:

<https://pennillesripp.com/2020/07/23/a-work-in-progress-digital-notebooks-for-reading-identity-development/>

Cult of Pedagogy Blog Remote Learning Varied Posts:

<https://www.cultofpedagogy.com/tag/remote-learning/>

And a Webinar:

Getting Your Hands Down Conversation

Going In Person or Online Webinar:

<https://page.stenhouse.com/webinar-wedekind-thompson?hsCtaTracking=ba116437-9f92-4d09-8596-a62ccb943bb1%7C55f7f599-e61e-48bc-a013-d593c017ddab>

The ABCs of the RTC

We hope that you are surviving this pandemic and staying well. Please remember to wear your mask every time you go out, wash your hands frequently and maintain your social distance. What a year!

There are two things that we can celebrate. First, the presidential election is over. **Joe Biden** and **Kamala Harris** will be inaugurated January 20, 2021. Second, progress on finding a vaccine for this virus seems to be progressing with some hope that we will have distribution of the first rounds of the vaccine in early 2021 with general distribution as early as April 2021. Good news indeed.

If you know of colleagues that have recently retired, please remind them that they must sign up to join the Retired Teacher Chapter. Dues are \$5 per month for teachers and \$2.50 for paraprofessionals. Retirees who want to join the RTC Delta Dental after their COBRA benefits have ended must be dues paying members of the RTC.

Chapter Office is open every Wednesday and Thursday from 10 am-2pm. The BTU office is closed but members can call 617-288-2000 or email **Marilyn Marion** at mmarion@btu.org or **Roz Avant** at rvant@btu.org, to get information, applications for membership and benefits. We also have a section on the BTU website www.btu.org under Resources. The site provides additional information about benefits.

Delta Dental is once again offering a 15% reduction in the premium cost for one month. The details are not yet available, but we expect to have a one-month reduction and then resume the regular premium. The cost of the Delta Dental premium will remain at the current rate.

We have a Facebook page with articles and information of interest to our members. You are invited to drop by and like our page. The latest information can

be found on that page.

In addition to the monthly article in this paper, the RTC emails bulletins with all of the information that affects our members – events; meetings; opportunities for participation in union events like rallies and demonstrations; political action; and legislation. Please notify the RTC office of your personal email. We keep those emails to provide you with quick access to information that you need. We do not share them beyond the BTU.

The legislative committee continues to fight for a better structure for our COLA base. The base is currently \$14,000. When the Boston Retirement Board calculates a Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) raise for retirees it applies only to the COLA base of \$14,000. Over time, this erodes the value of the pension putting Boston retirees at a disadvantage. The committee is meeting with representatives of the Mayor's office, the Boston Retirement Board, City Council members and Representatives and Senators to the Massachusetts legislature to improve the COLA base.

There are four elected officers of the RTC. These offices are Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. Elections to these offices are part of the BTU elections. The Executive Board of the RTC consists of the Chairs and Co-chairs of the RTC committees. The BTU election committee is meeting now and will be publishing the rules, regulations and timelines of the upcoming elections. Primary elections are held the first Wednesday in May if there are more candidates than positions. Final elections are held on the first Wednesday in June.

Members are reminded to update their information if they move, change their phone number or email address. Having the latest information about you allows us to keep in contact.

Reading, Writing and Talking with Kelly...

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means we collaborate with colleagues to ensure we are working from a strength based lens and constantly asking "what can they do?, how can I help expand that at this moment in time?". We must work together to not overwhelm their processing systems so as to value each and every bit of their lives they are willing to share with us, to allow them to grapple with complexity in our care, with scaffolded support, so they do not feel they are flailing, so they do not walk down the mountain alone. We do not know who they will grow up to be. Two of my former students have become my banker and my pharmacist. "What did I do to prepare them for that? What could I do now, knowing how limitless they are?"

Massive exposure to a wide array of texts and text types must become an essential part of each school day, regardless of a grade level curriculum. As critical consumers we need to draw our students' writing into the limelight. There is no other way to show we value the voices from our community. Our students are our community, but they do not always see themselves in books. When the social construct of Blackness includes a million variations; African-American, Haitian, Jamaican, Cape Verdean, Nigerian, Somali and on and on, and each family may have been here for eons or be a recent arrival. They may have come with wealth or faced poverty and rose above it or be grappling still. Latinx includes

Puerto Ricans, Cubans, Dominicans, El Salvadorans, Peruvians, Ecuadorians, Mexicans, Brazilians and a million combinations. Within that, our students may be Afro-Cuban, light-skinned Latinx, Indios not speaking Spanish. Asian students arrive from Cambodia and Laos or have been here for generations and are Vietnamese, Chinese, Japanese, Filipino. White students may be old or new immigrants from Saudi Arabia, Ireland or Armenia. Rich and poor, well educated or new to school, they are ours, our neighbors and families, our students, our hearts, our reason for getting up and coming to work each day. There are layers upon layers of culture that the publishing industry has not even contemplated but we know. They are our students. We must let them write their stories, find their voices and teach us about the world, day in, day out.

(This month's P2P is written by our special guest Kelly McDermott. Kelly is currently serving as a literacy coach for grades 2-6 at The Dr. William W. Henderson K-12 Inclusion School. Kelly L. McDermott also works as an adjunct professor at Lesley University. For ten years, Kelly worked in the Boston Public Schools serving in the Department of English Language Arts and Literacy as the Reading Recovery Teacher Leader and still serves as chair of the Reading Recovery Council of North America's advocacy committee.)

Change the Name

There comes a time when a city speaks as one and acts as one. The planes originating from Boston on 9/11 brought sorrow and pain to our city and the region; residents came together in an outpouring of public support. Again, with the Marathon Bombing, Boston responded in a way that the residuals of reverence remain. So too, should the City of Boston and its elected officials consider the renaming of Faneuil Hall, previously nicknamed "The Cradle of Liberty," at the time of its construction, in 1792.

Many might ask; Why, amid a lethal pandemic, a racial revolution, economic insecurity, and the horrific realization that normal may never be normal again, would the removal of the name Faneuil from a public building be so crucial to Bostonians moving forward as one? It would rebuke, in part, Boston's perceived or unperceived narrative of a legacy of racial and gender inequity. It would say to people of color in this city, whose ties to slavery, from the wrong end of it, need due process, and as poet Gil Scott Heron describes it saying,

"They call it due process, and some people are overdue."

It will not close the economic disparities among races, nor will it desegregate the schools or the numerous neighborhoods which have become gateless gated communities. However, it will signal to our visitors, students, nation, and beyond that, Boston is evolving.

While Boston's elected officials have been reticent or even fearful of open debate, organizations such as The New Democracy Coalition, civic, religious leaders of all ilks, and even Bostonians that are direct descendants of slaves, have pressed the issue, to the point where the world is watching. In three years, the notion of removing the name of Faneuil from a public building in Boston has gone from ridiculous to plausible. Mayor Martin Walsh has declined to respond to a twenty-week old request for a conversation with proponents. The Boston City Council members, as individuals, have at least on occasion, engaged in dialogue, albeit contentious and sometimes respectful. However, they have failed to execute the most fundamental doctrine of democracy, listening to the people. Ignoring calls for a public hearing for nearly three years suggests the dearth of political and moral courage runs deep. The council appears unconcerned this might be a litmus test in next year's municipal elections. Mayor Martin Walsh may also enjoy such political capital that supporting a continuing legacy of Peter Faneuil will not impact his prospects for a potential Biden Administration appointment. Regardless, with an at-large city council race decided by one vote in 2019, and a ubiquitous domino effect in America and Europe of the discarding symbols of slavery, neither the mayor nor city council should find comfort or refuge in the obstinance and ambivalence of the past.

Peter Faneuil, an 18th Century Boston merchant, was known for his business acumen. He obtained his wealth from inheritance and his participation in the commodity market. Included in those commodities were human beings. Active in the slave trade until his death in 1742, Peter Faneuil also owned five human beings valued today at \$123,679.68, making him "the worst of the worst." His participation and reliance on human trafficking for the financing of Faneuil Hall trumps the misdeeds of the confederates and dwarfs the ignorance of a professional baseball owner.

Today, Confederate monuments, symbols of the traitors to the United States, are rapidly coming down; even our military seeks their removal. "There is a difference in the remembrance of history and the reverence of it," stated Mayor Mitch Landrieu of New Orleans in his 2017 address on the removal of Confederate monuments from public property. His political foresight and courage helped propel a movement throughout the southern states, and consequently across the United States. Mayor Walsh similarly used his political capital to change Yawkey Street back to Jersey Street, due to Thomas Yawkey's obstinate bigotry. This writer believes that the name should have been changed to Yawkey Foundation Way, recognizing the road to redemption followed by the Yawkey Family; A road to redemption Peter Faneuil never traveled and never will.

Mayor Walsh has invoked the Landmark Commission's powers to change the name of Dudley Square to Nubian Square (another slaving civilization) and the removal of a white supremacy statue from Park Square, depicting a slave, kneeling at the feet of President Abraham Lincoln. If the mayor intends to the right the wrongs of the past, why stop short? It all boils down to consistency vs. hypocrisy. On the one hand, Mayor Walsh's hesitancy to return the damaged Christopher Columbus statue in the North End until the city could assess its historical meaning and, on the other, refuse to do the same for Faneuil Hall. This was done without a public hearing. Within a matter of days, the city determined Columbus passed the moral smell test and should remain, an apparent slight to the Indigenous and progressive people in our city, who seek change and respect for a diversity of views and its citizenry's heritage.

A policy of appeasement that seeks to equate the changing of street names, removal of offensive statues, or renaming of neighborhood squares to changing the name of Faneuil Hall does not reflect the reality of our times or the world-wide value of changing the name. Simply put, removing Faneuil's name has greater redeemable and societal benefit, coming down, than remaining. It would essentially reinforce the doctrine, "All Bostonians Matter."

It is incredulous to believe that Boston's competent city leaders have not recognized the offense of whitewashing the deeds of Peter Faneuil and continuing to hold his name in reverence.

The Walsh Administration's persistent mathematical problem of rhetoric not adding up to policies can be mitigated, to some degree, by a willingness to change on this and other issues. It is unbecoming of a "progressive city" and a "progressive" mayor.

The Boston City Council has rendered itself irrelevant on this issue, even while under the tutelage of two African American city council presidents. It is time for them to assert political and moral leadership, compassion, and reverence to the history we now know to be true.

Some astute political thinkers of many backgrounds believe the window of opportunity for change is now. Faneuil Hall no longer represents who we are as a city. The Mayor and the Landmark Commission are due gratitude for the changes they have made.

Tiny steps are good; bigger steps are better.

– Barry Lawton

The Boston Teachers Union **Backs Winners!!!**



Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley with Russell Weiss-Irwin and Johnny McInnis at the Lila Frederick.



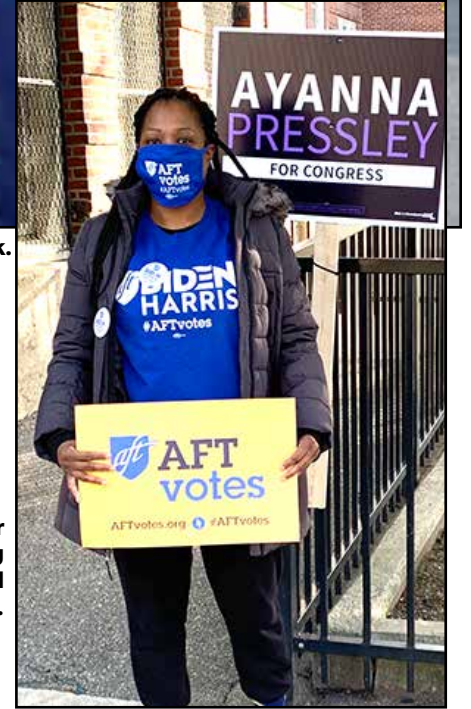
Paraprofessional Field Rep. Colleen Hart and BTU Political Director Johnny McInnis in Weymouth.



COPE Committee member Keisha Lewis standing out for our endorsed candidates.



Senator Ed Markey at the BTU Pilot School.



AFT Votes for Biden.



Senator Mike Brady at the GBLC Labor Day event with BTU Political Director Johnny McInnis.

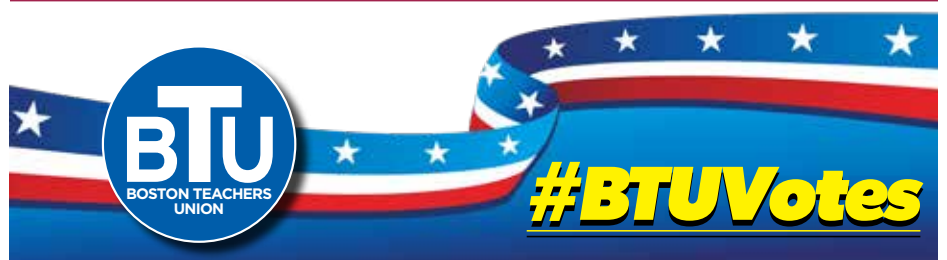


Everett City Councilor Gerly Adrien and Black Caucus President Adrienne Jordan of the BTU in Everett City Hall.

- Photos by Adrienne Jordan



Adrienne Jordan campaigns for the re-election of Gerly Adrien, the only woman of color on the Everett City Council. Adrienne Jordan is Chair of the BTU Black Caucus and Adrienne went to Everett to support our fellow colleagues of color and multicultural ethnicities in the fields of education and educational studies, as well as to bring solidarity to our union members.



BTU November 3 Election Results

U.S. PRESIDENT

Joe Biden

U.S. VICE PRESIDENT

Kamala Harris

U.S. SENATOR - MASSACHUSETTS

Edward Markey

U.S. CONGRESS - MASSACHUSETTS

MA 2nd Congressional - James McGovern

MA 3rd Congressional - Lori Trahan

MA 5th Congressional - Katherine Clark

MA 7th Congressional - Ayanna Pressley

MA 9th Congressional - William Keating

MASSACHUSETTS STATE SENATE INCUMBENTS

State Senator Julian Cyr, Cape and Islands

State Senator Patricia Jehlen, Second Middlesex

State Senator Mike Brady, Second Plymouth and Bristol

State Senator Marc Pacheco, First Plymouth and Bristol

State Senator Patrick O'Connor, Plymouth and Norfolk

State Senator Nick Collins, First Suffolk

State Senator Rebecca Rausch, Norfolk, Bristol and Middlesex

State Senator Karen Spilka, Second Middlesex and Norfolk

State Senator Walter Timilty, Norfolk, Bristol and Plymouth

MASSACHUSETTS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES INCUMBENTS

State Representative Thomas Vitolo, 15th Norfolk

State Representative Thomas Stanley, 9th Middlesex

State Representative Christine Barber, 34th Middlesex

State Representative Liz Miranda, 5th Suffolk

State Representative Jon Santiago, 9th Suffolk

State Representative Nika Elugardo, 15th Suffolk

State Representative Kevin Honan, 17th Suffolk

State Representative David Rogers, 24th Middlesex

State Representative Daniel Ryan, 2nd Suffolk

NON-INCUMBENTS FOR MASSACHUSETTS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Erika Uyerhoeven, 27th Middlesex

Brandy Fluker-Oakley, 12th Suffolk

Rob Consalvo, 14th Suffolk